

Say: The B in the ABCs of Supervision is Behavior.

Discuss: What do you think Behavior means for playground safety? (<1 minute)

**Introduction to
Child and Supervisor Behavior**

>>>

NPPS
National Program for Playground Safety

The **ABC's** of
Playground Supervision:
Behavior

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Show: ABC's of Supervision: Behavior Video: <https://www.playgroundsafety.org/videos>
(5:27 minutes)

[https://playgroundsafety.org/protected-
page?destination=/videos/behavior&protected_page=4](https://playgroundsafety.org/protected-page?destination=/videos/behavior&protected_page=4)

1. Click the link above
2. Enter in the access code
3. Click Play

What concepts in the video
stood out?



Discuss: What concepts in the video stood out? (1-2 minutes)

Behavior Factors Into Play

Outdoor time is **essential** for the healthy development and well-being of children.



Behaviors from children and adults can either promote or discourage positive play and learning experiences.

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Say: There is a growing body of research that suggests play contributes greatly to the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development of children. Outdoor time is an essential ingredient for the healthy development and well-being of children.

Providing appropriate play opportunities by offering enough materials, equipment, and space for children allows them to engage in individual and group play safely. It is important to understand how behaviors on the part of child and adults can either promote positive play and learning experiences or discourage them.

Supervisor Actions and Behaviors

The primary roles of supervisors are to **monitor play patterns** and **intervene when unsafe play behaviors or actions occur**.

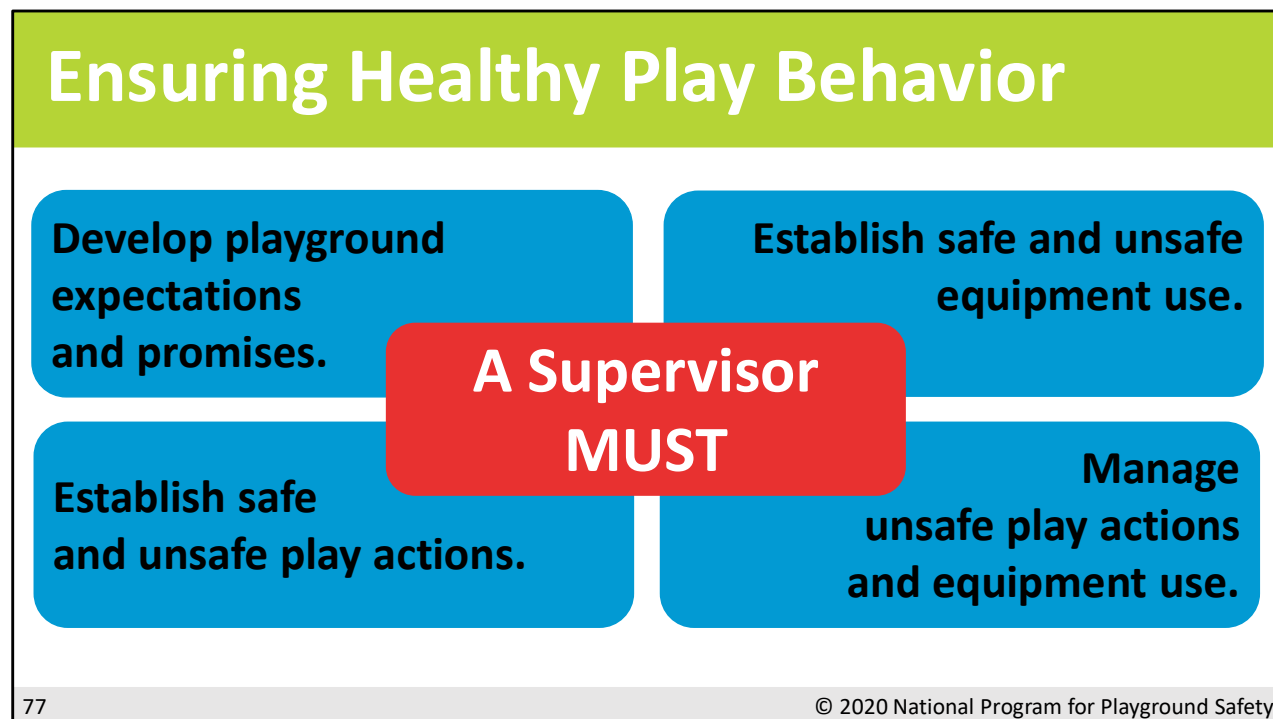
To assist in the creation of positive play experiences:

**Watch for
environment or
equipment
risks!**

Be Proactive!

**Establish safe
play actions and
safe equipment
use!**

Say: As trained child-care providers that oversee children on the playground, a primary role of supervisors is to monitor play patterns and intervene when unsafe play behaviors or actions occur. Supervisors can assist in creating positive play experiences by watching for environment or equipment risks, being proactive, and establishing safe play actions and safe equipment use.



Say: As supervisors, we need to ensure that children are engaging in healthy play behavior. To do so we will discuss:

1. Playground Expectations and Promises.
2. Safe and Unsafe Equipment use.
3. Safe and Unsafe Play Actions.
4. Managing Unsafe Play Actions and Equipment Use.

Playground Expectations & Promises

PLAYGROUND EXPECTATIONS

- 1 BE SAFE
- 2 RESPECT OTHERS
- 3 RESPECT PROPERTY
- 4 BE RESPONSIBLE
- 5 SUN PROTECTION & SANITATION



Expectations
guide children
in making **safe**
play choices.

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Say: Playground expectations should align with the culture of the program. This empowers children to lead, develop character, and make appropriate decisions.

Expectations and promises support the job of a supervisor as it guides children in making safe play choices. Expectations should be created with the children so that they have ownership of the expectations. Example playground expectations programs may want to consider include 1) be safe, 2) respect others, 3) respect property, 4) be responsible, and 5) use sun protection and sanitation

Playground Expectations & Promises



Expectations + Promises should be:

Limited

General

Positive

Pair expectations with examples for children to understand.

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Say: Expectations and promises should be limited, general, and positive. We want expectations to be limited so that children remember them. Safe, respectful, and responsible are abstract words to children. We need to pair these expectations with examples so that children can make the right choices following the expectations. If the children don't understand the expectation, they will not follow it.

Review the expectations with the children constantly for them to make safe choices. The expectations should be displayed once they are developed. Expectations should be reviewed with all students at the beginning of the year and reminders should be frequent and scheduled when situations arise.

Establishing Safe & Unsafe Equipment Use

Supervisors should meet to determine appropriate uses for equipment.



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Say: Children may engage in unsafe equipment use because they are exploring, or don't know how the equipment is supposed to be used. Every outdoor play environment is different. Supervisors should meet to determine appropriate uses for equipment. Walk through the playground and talk about how the pieces of equipment should and should not be used.

Establishing Safe & Unsafe Equipment Use



Supervisors should intervene as soon as they see inappropriate equipment use.

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Say: Once an agreement is reached, supervisors should intervene as soon as they see inappropriate equipment use. Addressing the proper use with the child will help them make a safe choice the next time. This is especially true when mixed ages are using the same space. Get to know the children so that you know when a child is accomplishing a difficult task or does not have the capability to complete it. Established safe and unsafe equipment use, and consistent messages from supervisors, will help the children know what is expected of them. Children will be able to make appropriate decisions when the expectations are set.

Examples of Unsafe Play Behavior

STAND-ALONE

- A younger child being lifted by a supervisor to use a piece of equipment.
- Standing on top of play-house.
- Climbing up the support pole of a swing to hang on the crossbar.

COMPOSITE

- Standing on top of a roof.
- Going down a slide either head-first or on the stomach.
- Blocking access or egress to pieces linked on a platform.

Say: Here are some examples of typical unsafe equipment use.

On a stand-alone play structure:

- A younger child is being lifted by a supervisor to use a piece of equipment.
- Standing on top of play-houses.
- Climbing up the support pole of a swing to hang on the crossbar.

On a composite playground structure:

- Standing on top of a roof.
- Going down a slide either head-first or on the stomach.
- Blocking access or egress to pieces linked on a platform.

**What unsafe play behaviors
have you observed?**



Discuss (<1 minute): What other unsafe play behaviors have you observed?

Examples of Unsafe Play Actions

- Leaving without telling/asking a supervisor.
- Using prohibited area.
- Hiding in spots where supervisors cannot see.
- Pushing or shoving others.
- Throwing sticks, rocks, snowballs, or trash.



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Say: Here are some examples of Unsafe Play Actions for individuals.

- Leaving without asking a supervisor.
- Using prohibited area.
- Hiding in spots where supervisors cannot see.
- Pushing or shoving others.
- Throwing sticks, rocks, snowballs, or trash.

Discuss: What is one unsafe play action you see frequently? (1 minute)

Managing Unsafe Play Action & Equipment Use

ACTION STEPS FOR PLAYGROUND INFRACTIONS

- ✓ Have a short verbal intervention with a review of expectation.
- ✓ Assist in compromising, finding a solution, or redirecting children.
- ✓ Walk with the child to discuss the situation, regulate emotions, and find solutions.
- ✓ Allow the child to sit in a safe visible location to gather thoughts and process emotions.

Consistent response by the staff assure that children are not getting mixed messages!

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Say: Consistent responses by the staff assure that young children are not getting mixed messages. When managing unsafe play actions and equipment use, it is pertinent that the supervisor remains positive and calm. Remind the child that is it for the safety of them and everyone.

Here are action steps that can be used to help manage playground infractions.

- Have a short verbal intervention with a review of expectation.
- When the disagreement is between children, assist them in compromising or finding a way to resolve the conflict. If the dispute continues, redirect them and send them to different groups or areas.
- If a child persists in using unsafe behaviors, have him or her walk with the supervisor for a short period. This allows for the supervisor and the child to discuss the situation, regulate emotions, and find solutions to the situation.
- Allow the child to sit in a safe, visible location to gather thoughts and process emotions.

Action Steps for Supervisors

- Communicate about potential problems.
- Be clear unsafe actions/behaviors can be harmful.
- Talk to the children involved.
- **Praise positive play behavior.**



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Say:

Communication among staff and children is an important. Make it clear being unkind and insensitive is not tolerated. At the first sign, the supervisor needs to intervene and explain what actions are not allowed, state the consequences, and follow through.

Discuss (<1 minute): What other unsafe play behaviors have you observed?

What other actions can supervisors use to promote safe play behaviors?



Discuss (<1 minute): What other actions can supervisors use to promote safe play behaviors?

Behaviors of Supervisors

Supervisors must be active in the following duties:

Arrival and Departure



Active Monitoring



Communication



Emergency Preparedness



Say: We know supervision is more than just being present. Supervisors must be active in the following duties:

- Arrival and Departure
- Active Monitoring
- Communication
- And Emergency Preparedness

Arrival and Departure



One supervisor should arrive on the playground before the children do.

*One supervisor should depart the playground after the children do, making a **final visual scan**.*

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Say: Outdoor play injuries occur at a higher rate at the beginning of the play period. One supervisor should be on the playground before the children. One supervisor should be the last person in the outdoor space following play and make the final visual scan before entering the building.

When entering and exiting the play area, toys, bikes, and other loose parts should have consistent procedures between the staff.

Active Monitoring



Active monitoring means continuous pattern of motion or movement, actively watching and listening.

Active Monitoring involves proper

Positioning

Scanning

Interactions
with children and adults

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Say: Active monitoring means the supervisor is in a continuous pattern of motion or movement, actively watching and listening.

Active monitoring involves:

- Proper positioning, scanning, and interactions with children and adults

Supervision monitoring activities begin with knowing proper positioning and movement within the outdoor play area.

By actively scanning, successful intervention through nonverbal interactions may stop potential injury producing situations.

Supervisor interactions must remain on task, related to supervision responsibility, and focused on the safety of the children.

Communication



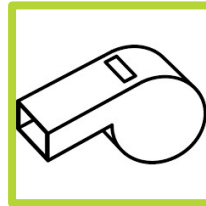
It is important for supervisors to have a main method of communication, and a back-up plan!



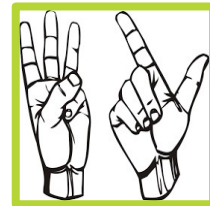
Cell Phones



Walkie-talkies



Whistles



Hand Signals

Say: A communication system is needed to get the attention of others when safety issues arise. It is important to have a main method of communication as well as a back up plan. Types of communication methods include:

- Cellphones or other electronic devices.
- Walkie-talkies.
- Whistles.
- Hand signals.

Emergency Preparedness

Communication is critical!

INJURY EMERGENCIES

- Understand procedures.
- Consider who will cover a supervisor's area.

SEVERE WEATHER AND NATURAL DISASTERS

- Have individual plans in place for each situation.

UNKNOWN ADULTS

- Be extra vigilant.
- Develop specific plans and communication methods.

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Say: Another behavior of supervisors is being prepared for injury emergencies. For instance, who will cover a supervisor's area while that supervisor tends to the injured child? What behaviors and actions should the program do for severe weather and natural disasters? What are the actions of a supervisor when there is an unknown adult near the playground?

Supervisors must be extra vigilant and have communication methods in place for these situations. Communication between the office and supervisors is critical for managing emergencies.

Listed are three potential emergencies and what to consider during that under that circumstance.

First, Injury emergencies.

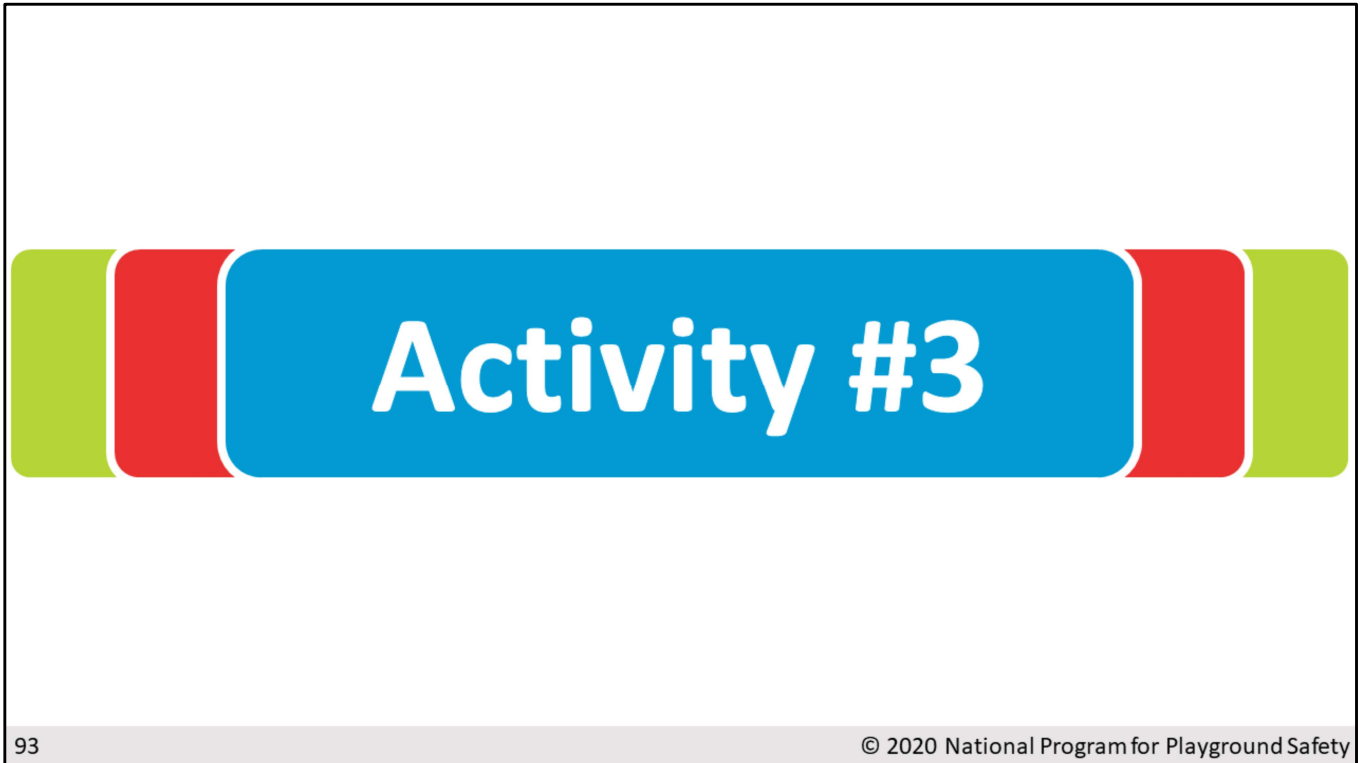
- You need to know the procedures and consider who will cover the supervisor's area that is attending to the injured child.

Second, Severe weather and natural disasters.

- Have individual plans in place for situation.

Third, unknown adults.

- Be extra vigilant and develop specific plans and communications methods.



See Activity Plan #3 for your reference

Site Map and Playground Behaviors


- Draw a site map of your play area – Make sure to indicate major elements in the space (i.e. roads, trees, playground equipment, etc.)
- Mark the location of where the playground supervisors should be located – *Remember open sightlines and zones of play!*
- Read through the case studies in small groups and answer the questions.

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Directions

1. Pass out the Site Map sheet and Case Study sheet to each group and/or participant.
2. Instruct each participant to draw a site map of the outdoor environment (<2 minutes).
 - Identify major elements in the space (i.e. roads, trees, equipment).
3. Have participants identify how they will prepare children for going outside (discuss <2 minutes).
 - Responses should include restroom procedures, sunscreen application, hand washing, etc.
4. Have participants identify how programs should check for a safe environment (discuss <2 minutes).
 - Responses should include checking safety of equipment and materials, using the NPPS Safety Report Card, and checking surface temperatures and UV radiation.
5. Instruct the participants to mark the locations in which they feel the playground supervisors should be located to ensure playground safety.
6. Discuss the site map (1-2 minutes) and share the reasoning behind the supervision locations.
7. Assign a separate case study to each group and discuss.
8. Share findings with the larger group.
9. Debrief and wrap up. Ask groups if they would make any changes to the location of the supervisors on their site map and explain.



**Wrap Up & Debrief
Activity #3**

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Wrap Up, Summarize, and Debrief: What did you find to be the most important? What do you want to implement at your childcare center? (1-2 minutes)